DIVISION OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

Together With TENNESSEE OSHA

SUMMER 2008

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The TOSHA Advisory Council

The TOSHA Advisory Council is a six-member board with the purpose of advising TOSHA on matters relating to the successful accomplishment of the mission of the division. The board meets semi-annually with TOSHA management to discuss ways to make TOSHA more efficient, effective, and user-friendly. The law creating the council was passed in 1988 but unfortunately there followed several years of inactivity. In 1999 the law was amended, and the meetings resumed in 2000. The board is made up of three members nominated by the Tennessee AFL-CIO and three members nominated by the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and industry. All members are appointed by the governor to serve four-year terms. The present members of the council are as follows:

Representing Labor
Becky Morris, Communications Workers of America from Nashville
Gary Watkins, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers from Chattanooga
Tony Adams, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers from Nashville

Representing Business
Bob Walker, Corporate Vice-President of Safety and Health with Bridgestone America in Nashville
Kent Carter, Human Resource Manager with Marvin Windows in Ripley
Pete Dickson, President of the Associated Builders and Contractors in Nashville

Mr. Dickson and Mr. Adams were recently appointed by Governor Bredesen to fill vacant positions.

Respirators and Tuberculosis

There are numerous solutions to reduce or eliminate the risks of contracting tuberculosis (TB) in the workplace, including the implementation of an effective control program. The use of respiratory protection in conjunction with early identification, isolation, and treatment of people with TB and the use of engineering and administrative procedures are effective. TOSHA has limited requirements for TB control in five workplaces where the CDC has identified workers as having a greater incidence of TB than the general population. For several years OSHA/TOSHA has not enforced the requirement for annual fit testing of respirators, usually the N95 filtering facepiece, for workers faced with exposure to persons with known or active TB. This was due to a rider placed by Congress on OSHA funding prohibiting enforcement of the requirement under the respiratory protection standard (29 CFR 1910.134). With this year's funding bill, the rider was omitted, opening the door for OSHA/TOSHA to enforce the requirement. Annual fit tests for respirators used for protection against TB are now required and are enforced by TOSHA. The respiratory protection standard requires employers to perform the fit tests using an OSHA-accepted protocol found in Appendix A of 29 CFR 1910.134 and to maintain a record of each test until the next fit test is administered.

Together with TOSHA is the newsletter of the Division of Occupational Safety and Health.

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Comments and suggestions are welcome.

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Training Requirements in TOSHA Standards

4,500 injuries and 50 deaths occur on scaffolding nationwide each year

This is another article in a series about TOSHA standards with training requirements. In previous editions, the occupational noise and emergency action plan training standards in general industry were discussed. This time let's take a quick look at training for employees working on scaffolds. An estimated 2.3 million construction workers, or 65 percent of the construction industry, work on scaffolds frequently. Protecting these workers from scaffold-related accidents would prevent 4,500 injuries and 50 deaths every year, at a savings for American employers of $90 million in workdays not lost. So say the numbers.

The construction standards on scaffolding (29 CFR 1926.454) require that each person working on a scaffold be trained to recognize the hazards associated with work on that type of scaffold and to know how to control those hazards. The training must be conducted by a person qualified in the field. A "qualified" person is defined by OSHA as "... one who, by possession of a recognized degree, certificate, or professional standing, or who by extensive knowledge, training, and experience, has successfully demonstrated his/her ability to solve or resolve problems related to the subject matter, the work, or the project." Training topics that must be covered in the training sessions are specified in the standard. Similarly, training requirements exist for persons who must erect, dismantle, move etc., a scaffold and this training must be done by a "competent" person. Re-training employees will frequently be necessary as most persons need reminding and re-focusing on safe work requirements and habits. Re-training of those involved in erecting, dismantling, moving etc., a scaffold is required under the following circumstances:

a. When worksite changes present a new hazard
b. When changes in the type of scaffold, fall protection, falling object protection, or any equipment present a new hazard
c. There are inadequacies in the employee's work involving scaffolds
d. When the employer has reason to believe retraining is necessary

Employers covered by the general industry standards also use scaffolds. The general industry standard is found at 29 CFR 1910.28. No specific training requirements are contained in this standard. However, there are many safety specifications, and a prudent employer would never assign an employee to erect a scaffold or work on a scaffold without proper training. The requirements in the construction standard can give guidance.

Condition: Electrical equipment was not installed in accordance with its listing and labeling.

Potential Effects: Electric shock, burns, and electrocution, from contact with faulty electrical equipment.

Standard: 29 CFR 1910.303(b)(2)

Recommended Action: Provide electrical equipment which is listed or labeled for your intended use by a recognized testing organization, such as Underwriters Laboratory or Factory Mutual.

Hearing Conservation, Part 2 Standard Threshold Shifts

A standard threshold shift (STS) is a change in hearing threshold relative to the baseline audiogram of an average of 10 decibels (dB) or more at the frequencies of 2,000, 3,000, and 4,000 Hertz. People normally lose some hearing with aging. To account for that, the OSHA/TOSHA noise standard includes age correction values in Tables F-1 and 2 of the occupational noise standard (29 CFR 1910.95). The audiologist may subtract the loss factors for 2,000, 3,000, and 4,000 Hertz, but this must be done to both the baseline audiogram and the annual audiogram before determining if the STS has occurred.

The STS is recordable on the OSHA 300 Log if the worker's hearing threshold averages 25 dB or higher in the 2,000, 3,000, and 4,000 Hertz frequencies (in the ear of the STS). Follow-up actions, including written notification to the employee, are necessary even if the STS is not recordable. If an STS is found, the employer is allowed to obtain a retest within 30 days of receipt of the STS result and use the retest as the annual audiogram instead of the initial one. If an employee is retested within 30 days of the first STS notification, and the retest shows that there is not an STS, then the employee's 300 Log entry can be lined through or removed.

Summary of Workplace Fatalities-2007

In 2007 TOSHA investigated 35 accidents where Tennessee workers lost their lives. In addition, there was one catastrophe where five employees were hospitalized, but recovered, due to exposure to carbon monoxide from propane-powered forklifts. One hundred eighteen employees died on the job in accidents where there was no TOSHA jurisdiction. A summary of the fatal injuries to Tennessee workers by cause is shown below:

Struck by object	**16**
Fall from height	**10**
Crushed by object or between two objects	**3**
Overturned equipment	**3**
Caught in nip point	**1**
Slip/fall	**1**
Heat stress	**1**

LEARN & LIVE

A TOSHA Case File Summary

A 26-year-old construction worker (pictured right) died while digging a ditch in the summer sun. The construction company was doing concrete footing work for construction of a new high school. The victim was digging a ditch with a shovel into which concrete was to be poured. It was his second day on the job, as he had just moved to Tennessee from Wisconsin. After working in the sun all day, at about 3:30 in the afternoon, the victim sat down on the edge of the ditch and fell over. He did not make any sound or ask for help. Fellow employees came to his aid and attempted to revive him. When this was unsuccessful, an ambulance was called, and he was transported to the local hospital. He died there a short time later of an apparent heat stroke.

To Prevent Such Incidents from Happening

1. Train workers on heat stress including the recognition of signs and symptoms of heat-related illnesses.
2. Ensure that workers drink at least one cup of water every 15 minutes.
3. Schedule strenuous work in high heat areas during cooler hours of the day.
4. Establish an acclimatization (gradually increasing work intervals in which employees are exposed to high heat) program for new workers in high heat areas so that they can build up tolerance to the heat and work activity.
5. Establish a work/rest schedule and a cool break area to allow workers' bodies to cool down.
6. Ensure that workers wear lightweight, light colored, loose-fitting clothes.

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